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SUBJECT: SLOVENIA ANNOUNCES INTENTION TO RECOGNIZE KOSOVO

REF: LJUBLJANA 78

Classified By: CDA Grace Shelton for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (U) On February 21, the GOS announced that it intends to recognize Kosovo as an independent and sovereign nation. At a press conference following a meeting of the Cabinet, the PM's spokesperson announced that the government had adopted a Conclusion on the Recognition of Kosovo and had sent its proposal to Parliament for ratification. Although the Parliament will begin its next session on February 25, it is possible that the proposal may not be addressed before the Foreign Relations Committee meets on February 26.

¶2. (U) Prime Minister Jansa stated on February 20 that although recognition is very likely, he could not guarantee that Parliament will ratify the proposal. Following Kosovo's declaration of independence, most parliamentarian parties stated that Slovenia should not hurry with recognition, but rather follow developments in the region and act in accordance with other EU members. The government's announcement also comes in spite of appeals from Slovenian businessmen not to recognize Kosovo too soon due to possible negative economic effects for Slovene companies doing business in Serbia.

¶3. (C) We expect that, despite some opposition in Parliament, the majority of Parliamentarians will back ratification of the proposal. On February 19, FM Dimitrij Rupel told Charge that he was hopeful that the process of recognition of Kosovo could be completed within ten days (reftel).

SHELTON